

March 14, 2006

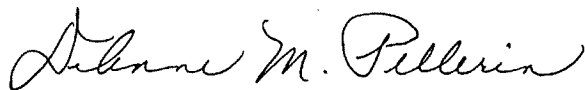
To Whom It May Concern:

For the past eight years, L'Anse Creuse Public Schools has annually sponsored Yellow Ribbon Week at the district's four middle schools and three high schools. Our students, staff, parents, and community have positively received the program.

Throughout the 7-10 day campaign, lessons are taught at each grade level to provide children with knowledge surrounding teen suicide and tools for preventing teen suicide. The lessons often include guest speakers who share their firsthand experiences and provide guidance for assisting teens in dealing with this sensitive topic. The feedback from parents and students has been overwhelmingly positive.

While the subject may be difficult to comprehend and unpleasant to think about, the issue is real and very serious. Our students and community need to be prepared to deal with and appropriately respond to situations of this nature when necessary. Consequently, it is the intent of L'Anse Creuse Public Schools to continue our involvement in the Yellow Ribbon Week program.

Sincerely,



DiAnne M. Pellerin, Ed.D.  
Superintendent

DMP:bn

**NOTICE OF NONDISCRIMINATION.** It is the policy of L'Anse Creuse Public Schools not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin or ancestry, gender, age, disability, height, weight or marital status in its programs, services, activities, or employment. Inquiries related to nondiscrimination policies should be directed to: Civil Rights Coordinator, Assistant Superintendent for Personnel, L'Anse Creuse Public Schools Administration, 36727 Jefferson, Harrison Township, MI 48045, (586) 783-6300. Nondiscrimination inquiries related to disability should be directed to: Section 504 Coordinator, Director for Special Education, (586) 783-6500

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Mrs. Conklin brought Yellow Ribbon program to our school several years ago. In doing so, she made sure that all the staff had the information they needed to get started with the students. As you can imagine, this was a "touchy" topic for many who didn't feel qualified, or experienced enough to bring it into their classrooms. Many were afraid that discussing the topic would exacerbate it. Research showed that was not the case, and it definitely was not in our school.

The program now is a part of our school year. We have a visit from parents who have experienced the death of a child through suicide. There are activities planned in the classroom for students. Open dialog is encouraged. The visit by parents is a profound experience for our students. They are able to put a name and face to suicide and learn the devastating effect on families and friends.

When the program ends students receive Yellow Ribbon cards with a number to call if they, or someone they know needs help. Students are also encouraged to turn those cards in if they hear someone talk of suicide.

This program has been a wonderful addition to our school. Recently there were two suicides, as well as several suicide attempts in a neighboring community. My immediate thought was they probably need Yellow Ribbon in their schools if they don't offer it now.

I believe students, parents, staff and the community have benefited from Yellow Ribbon.

Marlene Heitmanis  
Teacher  
L'Anse Creuse Middle School-Central



**DiAnne M. Pellerin, Ed.D.**  
SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

**Patricia Rabenburg**  
PRINCIPAL

**Kirk Carolan**  
ASSOCIATE PRINCIPAL

### **To Whom It May Concern:**

**During my seventh grade year at Middle School Central the Yellow Ribbon Suicide Prevention Program came to us for the first time. At that point and time I was in desperate need of it. A husband and wife talked to us about their son who killed himself. I remember how saddened I was to hear of their story. I saw the pain in their eyes and the sorrow in their voice. They spoke of how hard it was to lose their only son to suicide. Also that we did not have to go that route. I left the family with a better understanding of suicide. I knew then I was not alone and I could get help. They handed out little yellow cards, which I still carry today and I have used more than once since I received it.**

**In my opinion the Yellow Ribbon Program is of great benefit to young adults. The program should reach as many teenagers as it can! It can help spread the word that there is hope to someone in need and that is an important message to send! The Yellow Ribbon Program helped me and so many of my peers through hard time in our lives.**

**Along with the Yellow Ribbon Program I think it is very important that middle school and high school students have school counselors available to help them through emotional and stressful situations. I couldn't have made it through middle school without the support of my counselor, Mrs. Conklin. I think we need all counselors to educate and support our youth about issues that face us each and every day!**

**Thank you for taking the time to listen to the important things that young kids need to know and be educated about!**



**DiAnne M. Pellerin, Ed.D.**  
SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

**Patricia Rabenburg**  
PRINCIPAL

**Kirk Carolan**  
ASSOCIATE PRINCIPAL

**Student Quote: "The Yellow Ribbon Program helped to save my life. I was very depressed and feeling suicidal and did not know how to tell anyone. It was easy to give the card to a friend who took me to my counselor."**

**"The Yellow Ribbon Program is very important. We need to remind our students that there are several adults in the building and community who care and are there to help them. Our students need to learn the warning signs of depression in order to help themselves and/or their friends. Friends are often the first chain of response and they need to learn to pass this information on to a trusted adult. We had a suicide at our high school two years ago. The student's friends knew she was suicidal but they felt they could handle it and did not tell an adult. We need to reinforce the importance of trusting an adult for help and the Yellow Ribbon Program is the perfect way to spread this very important message."**

**Ann Mueller**  
**High School Counselor**



**DiAnne M. Pellerin, Ed.D.**  
SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

**Patricia Rabenburg**  
PRINCIPAL

**Kirk Carolan**  
ASSOCIATE PRINCIPAL

We have been very impressed with the “Yellow Ribbon” program at L’Anse Creuse North and the outstanding job our Counselors have done implementing the program. It has brought awareness to students and staff. It is a program that has been proactive and one we want to continue to incorporate every year for our school community.

Thank you for your support on this across the school district.

Sincerely,

Dave Jackson



Dear Mr. Hipple,

I just want to thank you for coming to L'Anse Cruse Middle School Central and speaking to us about suicide and your sons lost.

I have to say you've got a lot of courage to talk about your sons lost just for us who have been thinking about suicide to think again. I know it would be hard for me, that's why I'm very grateful of you coming out here to talk to us.

Also I've learned a lot more about suicide and how it affects you love ones. Once again thank you for coming.

Sincerely,

Dear Mr. Hipple,

Thank you so much for coming to my school and talking about the story of your son Jeff's suicide. I believe you have so much courage to go out to schools and talk about him. If that was me doing what you do I would be crying all the time. I really didn't know depression could make people resort to suicide. Your facts about suicide had made a great impact on me. So now if I have a friend who may commit suicide I can help. Again thank you so much for coming to my school.

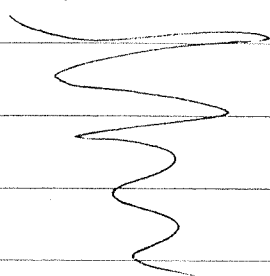
Sincerely,

Dear Mr. Hippie

I wanted to thank you for coming to our school to talk about suicide. And your story of your 15 year old Jeff. Your story was really touching. It was sad and now I know that when someone commits suicide it is hurting other people. I have thought about committing suicide and I have tried it once or twice, but now you have made me change my mind and I will never try it again.

Thank you

Sincerely





Dear: Mr and Mrs. Edwards

I completely understand how you feel my Father committed suicide 2 months before I was born, you're probably saying "It isn't that bad because you didn't know him." But think of this witch is better to know the person for 12 years love him and share time with him or never meet him and miss out on all the good times you could have had. I feel sorry for you having to see your son hanging like that and dying in your arms, but you've had the courage to stand up in front of millions of kids and adults and tell your story, for that I admire you. I'm sure that your son would proud that his parents are saving thousands of lives, he would probably come back if he could. Once again I would like to thank you for coming to our school.

Sincerely,

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Edwards,

Thank you for coming to our school. I'm sure it was very hard for you to talk about your son, but you definitely made a difference. I used to have different thoughts about suicide, but now I could never kill myself because I would hurt so many other people. It's easier just to make the best of life while you're here, and you pointed that out to me. Thank you so much!

Happy Holidays!

Jerry Martin  
R-3-04

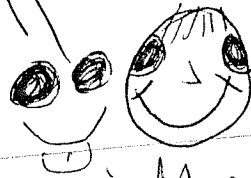
Thank you for coming to talk about your son suiciding. At one time I thought about taking my own life. But I was such a coward. I am so glad that I was at that time. I just wish he had the same opportunity that I did. I wouldn't even wish suicide to even the worst people in the world. Thank you for your touching speech.

From:

To: The Edwards Family



# THANK YOU!!



Dear Mrs. Colombini and Mrs. Rock,

Thank you for sharing your stories. It did us all good. We - I hope we will help the program keep going and now I know what to do, if the situation of suicide comes up. We will all be prepared.

Your stories gave us a chance to listen to something real. Something alive, in front of us instead of reading it in a book or magazine, or seeing on TV. You guys really helped. We All Thank You ALOT!



# THANK

Sincerely,



Dear Mrs. Colombini and Mrs. Beck,

I thank you both for coming into talk to us. I am very sorry for your losses. I know someone who tried to take his life but we found out and got help for him last year, and to tell you the truth I don't know what I would do if he wasn't here today. But the way he found help was his yellow ribbon card! You both really told our 6<sup>th</sup> grade classes the other day and I am sure you touched a couple of them because you did me. I'm glad you came to my school to talk to us. I think I really understand that Suicide is the wrong choice no matter what the problem is. Thank you very much! And again I'm sorry for your losses.

Sincerely,

# Youths conquer suicide threat

By Jacquelyn Halas

Capital News Service

LANSING — He was an honor student, played J.V. soccer; had lots of friends and was known as a "funny guy" at Chippewa Valley High School in Clinton Township.

Yet Steve Comer was hospitalized after an attempted suicide and was diagnosed with bipolar disorder type 2 at age 15.

Experts say teens battling with mental illnesses are becoming more common. Comer, now 20, is in his third year at Lawrence Technological University in Southfield pursuing a degree in architecture.

"When you wake up depressed every day for a month or two, everything is gray — not even shades of gray. That's what makes it so hard, so unchanging. It's hard to break out of it on your own without a counselor's

help. It breaks you down and makes you question everything."

Comer is one of the many young people who've triumphed over suicide.

The National Youth Risk Behavior Survey shows that the number of high school students throughout the nation who've made a suicide plan or attempted suicide hasn't increased and the number of those who have seriously considered suicide dropped between 1999 and 2003.

According to the University of Michigan Depression Center, the number of depressed females outnumbers males by two to one, once puberty commences. Children with psychiatric disorders such as ADHD and anxiety and eating disorders are more prone to suffering from mental illness such as depression. Those with general medical condition such as diabetes and asthma are also said to be more at risk for depression by the center.

Suicide is a drastic consequence of depression. Cheryl King, the director of the child and adolescent depression program at University of Michigan Health System, said suicide rates among 14-17 year old boys are higher than among girls.

"I felt like I was already dead," Comer said. "The hardest thing to understand about suicide is that you don't feel like you're going to die, you feel like you already did."

The federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, says suicide is the third-ranking cause of deaths among people from 15 to 34.

Unrecognized depression among youth is a growing concern. According to King, who is also the chief psychologist in U-M Medical School's Department of Psychiatry and developed the Youth-Nominated Support Team, one in five students will suffer from depression before they graduate from high school. Twenty percent of young people are expected to be suffering from clinical depression.

King said mental health services for adolescents are limited and hard for people to access.

The state is promoting earlier recognition of symptoms by educating "gatekeepers" such as teachers, pediatricians and physicians.

Another goal is to increase the educational material available through public awareness announcements and statewide campaigns to shed light on undiagnosed depression and break down the stigma that goes along with getting help, King said.

Comer said since he was embarrassed and felt like less of a person due to this condition, he couldn't relate his condition to his family and friends because he knew how much it would hurt them.

Then he realized that suicide would cause the ultimate hurt.

"If I didn't have the friends I have, I wouldn't be alive today. First and foremost, it's family and friends, but always tell your family first because they'll always be the ones there to help you."

Overall, King said people aren't getting help because there aren't enough community health services and the amount of funding hasn't changed.

Comer said it's important for depressed teens to find a counselor they're comfortable with and find a positive energy outlet.

For him, it was playing the guitar.

"It was a way to stop thinking about everything else. I could focus on the notes and sound - what I was playing. I was so scatter-brained, and it would focus my attention, make myself sit down and do something. Find what the meditative part of your life is and do it."

*Photo by Capital News Service* +



**TO:** Student Assistance Network Representative

**FROM:** Nancy Buyle/Lucy Smith

**DATE:** August 2, 2002

**RE:** Yellow Ribbon Resource Packet

Thanks to you--along with school counselors, teachers, principals and superintendents--our county broadly publicized the national "Yellow Ribbon" (YR) teen suicide prevention program in middle and high schools during 2000/2001. Resources from other community partners, too, such as the MISD, Creating a Healthier Macomb, the Crisis Center, Auxiliary to the Macomb Osteopathic Society and the Warren Jaycees, came together to create the largest single launch in the history of the national program.

**Creating a Healthier Macomb is again making Yellow Ribbon wallet cards available at no charge for use this school year—contact me to order a supply for your building. In addition, we are enclosing a packet of the original educational materials used at the trainings AND new educational resources created by representatives from several school districts.**

Because new students enter each year, we encourage you to make YR an annual event with your students and their parents. National Yellow Ribbon week is September 15-21, 2002. Schools may decide to use the enclosed materials to help retrain staff on suicide prevention. Also, on September 22, our friends at the Warren Jaycees are holding a walk-a-thon at 2 p.m. They hope that many students, parents, and school staff will walk that day to raise funds for our county and state YR programs.

Contact me to order YR cards or for any questions or assistance you may need at 586-758-5766 or [nbuyle@misd.net](mailto:nbuyle@misd.net). Also, if you have resources you find helpful in this effort, please send them to me for next year's packet. **Thanks so much for your past and continuing involvement!**

Enclosures:

1. Brochures from the Macomb County Crisis Center (please call them for additional copies)
2. Camera-ready artwork for:
  - Yellow Ribbon Program Brochure (and sample finished brochure)
  - Two Parent Resources: *Working Together to Prevent Youth Suicide* and *If your Child Seems Depressed*, useful for parent newsletters
  - Depression Self-Assessment Tool: *How Blue are You?* (and sample finished document)
3. YR Campaign Student Evaluation form (thanks to L'Anse Creuse High School North)
4. Classroom presentation script on suicide prevention suitable for teacher delivery with middle and high school students (thanks to Kathryn Schallmo of Fitzgerald Schools)
5. List of educational videos and catalogs related to suicide prevention education (various people passed this information on to us)
6. Warren Jaycees' YR walk-a-thon information.

## **Youth Suicide Prevention**

Middle School Central will be participating in a school-wide program to educate our students in the area of Youth Suicide Prevention. The Yellow Ribbon Campaign will kick-off during the weeks of November 22 through December 3, 2004. The goal of the program is to remove the aura of secrecy and myth that surrounds suicide. Current statistics support that receiving information about suicide prevention serves to decrease the incidents of suicide attempts. Our goal at Central is to create a trained staff and supportive environment to prevent the incidence of youth suicide.

Counselors and teachers will be presenting various activities during "Connections" on suicide prevention throughout this time frame. We are honored this year to also have three guest speakers visit our school:

- We will be having Mrs. Glenda Everett speak to our 6<sup>th</sup> graders on Monday, November 29<sup>th</sup>, from 8:00- 8:45 a.m. Mrs. Everett lost her 14-year-old son to suicide.
- We will be having Mr. Eric Hipple (former Lions Quarterback) speak to our 8<sup>th</sup> graders on Tuesday, November 30<sup>th</sup>, from 8:00 – 8:45 a.m. Mr. Hipple lost his 15-year-old son to suicide.
- We will be having Mr. and Mrs. Jeff Edwards speak to our 7<sup>th</sup> graders on Thursday, December 2<sup>nd</sup>, during exploratory times. The Edwards lost their 12-year-old son to suicide.

These speakers are actively involved in preventing other parents from experiencing this tragedy and helping children understand what to do if they or someone they know is feeling depressed and/or suicidal. The students will be receiving a Yellow Ribbon card that will provide information to help in the prevention of suicide incidents. The counselors and social workers will be assisting during this time and throughout the school year regarding these same issues.

If you have any concerns, please feel free to contact your child's counselor. We look forward to your support in aiding in the prevention of suicide for all of our L'Anse Creuse Middle School Central students.

Diana R. Conklin  
Counselor

Cathy McWatt  
Counselor



# Yellow Ribbon Campaign Evaluation

*This form is designed to be machine scanned. Please use a No. 2 pencil and completely fill in the bubble for each answer you select. Do NOT fold or staple the pages.*

*Please answer each question as honestly as possible. Do not share your answers with your classmates.*

1. Building:

☐ MS-C

☐ MS-N

☐ MS-E

☐ MS-S

## Gender

2. What is your gender?

☐ Female

☐ Male

- |   | True                     | False                    |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 3. I received information about depression and suicide during the Yellow Ribbon Campaign within my school.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. I understand the warning signs of depression.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. I feel knowledgeable about depression.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6. I understand that I could use the Yellow Ribbon Card to let an adult know that I'm feeling depressed and/or suicidal.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7. I am comfortable discussing the topic of depression and suicide.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 8. I am comfortable talking about my feelings.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 9. I know someone who has used their Yellow Ribbon Card.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 10. I have used my Yellow Ribbon Card.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 11. I know what to do if someone tells me that they are suicidal.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 12. I am aware of the Crisis Hotline phone number.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 13. I heard a speaker on the subject of depression and suicide.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 14. I saw a video about depression and suicide.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 15. I participated in a classroom discussion about depression and suicide.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 16. I have spoken to my school counselor about my feelings of sadness or depression.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 17. I have spoken to my school counselor about my concerns about a friend or family member who seemed sad or depressed.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 18. I understand that suicide is never an option.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 19. If someone told me that they were depressed or suicidal, and made me promise that I would keep this information a secret, I would tell a responsible adult. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

		True	False
■	20. If someone told me that they were depressed or suicidal, and made me promise that I would keep this information a secret, I would keep the secret.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
■	21. I can talk to my parent(s) about my feelings of sadness.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
■	22. My parents would immediately get me help if I told them that I felt depressed or suicidal.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
■	23. I know the difference between sadness and depression.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
■	24. I have never felt depressed.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
■	25. I have had thoughts about suicide.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
■	26. I know that Yellow Ribbon means "Suicide Prevention".	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
■	27. I know that I can find more information about depression and Yellow Ribbon in my school's counseling office.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

*Thank you for completing this survey about your feelings and the Yellow Ribbon Campaign.*

***Remember:***

***Suicide is NEVER an option. Help is just a phone call away!***

***1-800-307-9100 (collect calls accepted 24 hours a day)***

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# **Yellow Ribbon Responses 2004-2005**

**Survey Title:  
Yellow Ribbon Campaign**

**Administered To:  
Yellow Ribbon Survey 2004-2005  
June 1, 2005**

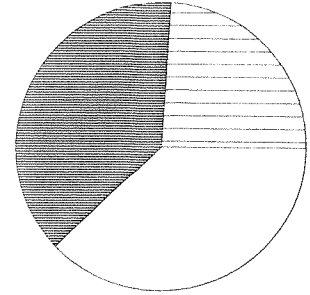
# Yellow Ribbon Responses 2004-2005

Administered To: Yellow Ribbon Survey 2004-2005

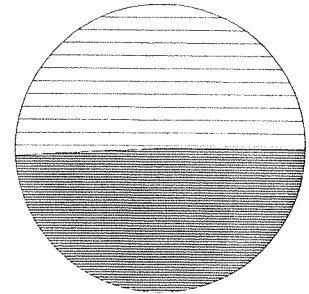
Date Administered: June 1, 2005

## Demographic Section

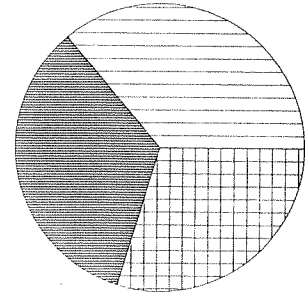
	Included	Frequency	Percentage
MS-C	✓	378	24.5%
MS-E	✓	586	38.0%
MS-N	✓	0	0.0%
MS-S	✓	580	37.6%
TOTALS		1544	100.0%



	Included	Frequency	Percentage
Female	✓	780	51.1%
Male	✓	747	48.9%
TOTALS		1527	100.0%



	Included	Frequency	Percentage
6th	✓	551	36.0%
7th	✓	525	34.3%
8th	✓	456	29.8%
TOTALS		1532	100.0%



# Yellow Ribbon Responses 2004-2005

Administered To: Yellow Ribbon Survey 2004-2005

Date Administered: June 1, 2005

## Main Report Section

		YES	NO
4. I know that Yellow Ribbon means "Suicide Prevention".	MS-C 376	371	5
	MS-E 580	518	62
	MS-N 0	0	0
	MS-S 580	577	3
	Total 1537	1467	70

		YES	NO
5. I understand the warning signs of depression.	MS-C 378	367	11
	MS-E 578	508	70
	MS-N 0	0	0
	MS-S 580	567	13
	Total 1537	1442	95

		YES	NO
6. I received information about depression and suicide during the Yellow Ribbon Campaign within my school.	MS-C 377	363	14
	MS-E 576	510	66
	MS-N 0	0	0
	MS-S 580	564	16
	Total 1534	1438	96

# Yellow Ribbon Responses 2004-2005

Administered To: Yellow Ribbon Survey 2004-2005

Date Administered: June 1, 2005

## Main Report Section

		YES	NO
7. If I were ever feeling sad or depressed or suicidal, I know someone I could go to for help.			
MS-C	378	365	13
MS-E	581	551	30
MS-N	0	0	0
MS-S	580	559	21
Total	1540	1475	65

		YES	NO
8. I have or know someone who has used their Yellow Ribbon Card.			
MS-C	378	33	345
MS-E	579	62	517
MS-N	0	0	0
MS-S	580	53	527
Total	1538	148	1390

		YES	NO
9. I know what to do if someone tells me that they are suicidal.			
MS-C	377	369	8
MS-E	552	482	70
MS-N	0	0	0
MS-S	579	556	23
Total	1509	1407	102

# Yellow Ribbon Responses 2004-2005

Administered To: Yellow Ribbon Survey 2004-2005

Date Administered: June 1, 2005

## Main Report Section

		YES	NO
10.	The information I received from a speaker and/or video was helpful.		
MS-C	377	353	24
MS-E	558	460	98
MS-N	0	0	0
MS-S	578	526	52
Total	1514	1340	174

		YES	NO
11.	I understand that I can go to my school counselor to talk about myself, a friend or family member regarding sadness, and/or depression and/or suicide.		
MS-C	378	371	7
MS-E	581	547	34
MS-N	0	0	0
MS-S	580	563	17
Total	1540	1481	59

		YES	NO
12.	I understand that suicide is never an option.		
MS-C	378	348	30
MS-E	552	501	51
MS-N	0	0	0
MS-S	579	543	36
Total	1510	1393	117

# Yellow Ribbon Responses 2004-2005

Administered To: Yellow Ribbon Survey 2004-2005

Date Administered: June 1, 2005

## Main Report Section

		YES	NO
13. If someone told me that they were depressed or suicidal, and made me promise that I would keep this information a secret, I would tell a responsible adult.	MS-C 376	356	20
	MS-E 570	505	65
	MS-N 0	0	0
	MS-S 580	542	38
	Total 1527	1404	123

		YES	NO
14. I know the difference between sadness and depression.	MS-C 378	330	48
	MS-E 575	476	99
	MS-N 0	0	0
	MS-S 580	520	60
	Total 1534	1326	208

		YES	NO
15. I have had thoughts about suicide.	MS-C 377	66	311
	MS-E 543	110	433
	MS-N 0	0	0
	MS-S 579	118	461
	Total 1500	295	1205



# Yellow Ribbon Responses 2004-2005

Administered To: Yellow Ribbon Survey 2004-2005

Date Administered: June 1, 2005

## Main Report Section

16. I understand how the Yellow Ribbon Card works.

		YES	NO
MS-C	377	365	12
MS-E	572	456	116
MS-N	0	0	0
MS-S	580	552	28
Total	1530	1373	157

17. I know that I can find more information about depression and Yellow Ribbon in my school's counseling office.

		YES	NO
MS-C	378	355	23
MS-E	577	529	48
MS-N	0	0	0
MS-S	579	559	20
Total	1535	1444	91